

More on gas rationing

Energy Dept. has announced additional public hearing dates for its proposed contingency plan for emergency gasoline and diesel fuel rationing [CONSUMER REGISTER: July 15]. Also announced was a change of address for the Aug. 17-18 Dallas hearings.

Following are new hearing dates and address change with name and telephone number of contact person. All hearings start at 9:30 am.

Aug. 8
Pioneer Middle School
3rd and Eagle St.
Anchorage, AL 99501
David Swett 907-265-5361

Aug. 17-18
Adolphus Hotel
1321 Commerce St.
Dallas, TX 75221
Dennis Butler 214-749-7705

Aug. 29-30
Federal Building
970 Broad St., Room 730
Newark, NJ 07102
Eugene W. Hennessy 212-264-8051

Details--Federal Register: July 21, page 31345. **CONSUMER REGISTER** July 15. For more information write or call William H. Jackson, Room 6304, 2000 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20461; telephone 202-254-8690.

Household movers

Aug. 30 is new deadline for comments on **Interstate Commerce Commission's (ICC)** proposal requiring household moving companies to charge shippers only what they originally estimated the moving costs would be. ICC has extended the deadline because of substantial and complex issues raised and the Commission's need for complete information on the effect of its proposals.

Proposed regulations would make estimates binding on carriers (movers) when those estimates are provided for individual c.o.d. shippers of household goods. The regulations would not affect shipments paid for by the **Defense Dept.**, other Federal agencies, or private corporations paying their employees' moving expenses.

Details--Federal Register: June 29, page 28217. **CONSUMER REGISTER** June 1. Send comments to Secretary, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, DC 20423. For more information write or call Michael Erenberg at above address; telephone 202-275-7292.

Space heaters

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has extended to Aug. 29 a decision on banning unvented gas-fired space heaters. CPSC says the heaters can release carbon monoxide (CO) into the living space which may result in CO poisoning and asphyxiation [CONSUMER REGISTER March 1].

CPSC received over 200 comments on the proposed ban and held 3 public hearings in different parts of the country. Some commentators mentioned that several European countries have mandatory standards requiring use of a component for detecting oxygen depletion and stopping the gas flow to the heater before CO buildup becomes hazardous. CPSC says it does not know if such a component is used by American companies manufacturing unvented gas-fired space heaters.

An analysis of oxygen depletion systems has been completed by CPSC and **National Bureau of Standards**. However, additional time is needed to evaluate the results.

Details--Federal Register: July 21, page 31345.

: July 15. For more information write or call William H. Jackson, Room 6304, 2000 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20461; telephone 202-254-8690.

CPSC priorities

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is modifying its priority rankings for projects under consideration and is grouping projects into 7 major categories. These do not reflect the priority of one category over another nor do they reflect all of CPSC's activities. The new categories and updated priority projects are as follows:

- **Enforcement--initiating programs** to enforce previous regulations, especially those dealing with architectural glazing materials (primarily sliding glass doors) and sharp edges on children's toys. CPSC will soon publish final regulations defining the responsibilities of manufacturers, distributors, and retailers in notifying CPSC of substantial consumer product hazards.

- **Litigation--seeking court action** on imminently hazardous products, such as aluminum wire, as well as responding to litigation challenging CPSC regulations.

- **Research--conducting studies** on CB and TV antennas, energy conservation devices (such as vent dampers), formaldehyde toxicity, projectile toys, smoke detectors, and asbestos in consumer products.

- **General policy development** for regulations--developing policies and procedural rules for efficient operation and public understanding of CPSC actions. CPSC is currently establishing policies to deal with carcinogenic hazards and clarifying definitions of children's sleepwear under the Flammable Fabrics Act.

- **Product-specific regulatory development--developing mandatory rules** initiated by the Commission or based on petitions from consumers, industry, or government. CPSC is considering for possible regulatory action: benzene, cellulose insulation, miniature Christmas tree lights, power mowers, public playground equipment, unvented gas-fired space heaters, hazardous small parts in toys and other products for children and an improved flammability test. Also being considered are development of mandatory flammability standards for rugs, carpets and upholstered furniture.

- **Voluntary standards development--providing for involvement** by groups outside the Commission, such as industry representatives, testing laboratories, and ad hoc groups. For example, CPSC is working with the Chain Saw Manufacturers Association (CSMA) on voluntary safety standards [CONSUMER NEWS May 1]. CPSC has denied a voluntary safety petition requesting issuance of a mandatory safety standard in order to work with CSMA on a voluntary basis. (See details in **Federal Register:** June 16, page 26103.) Other voluntary efforts being monitored by the Commission are standards for smoke detectors, television sets, snowmobiles, high chairs, strollers, and snowblowers.

- **Information and education--informing consumers** of potential product hazards in order to reduce injuries. Skateboard safety is a priority project in this category.

These listings are intended to help the public follow CPSC's activities and should not discourage consumers from calling the Commission's attention to other potentially hazardous products. Consumers can use the toll-free hotline 800-638-2666. In Maryland call 800-492-2937.

Details--Federal Register: July 10, page 29744; Sept. 22, 1977, page 27960. **CONSUMER NEWS** Aug. 1, 1977. For more information write or call Charles R. Casper, Office of Program Management, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207; telephone 301-492-6554.

Tire grading

Aug. 16 is deadline for comments on **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA)** proposal to modify the Uniform Tire Quality Grading regulation on traction. This proposal revises symbols used to indicate traction grades.

Under the present rule, traction would be identified by the following symbols **, *, O. However, NHTSA proposes changing these to A, B, or C for clarity and to aid consumers. Tires graded "A," in this category, would offer the best traction.

A paper label attached to the tread surface would give consumers general grading information covering traction, treadwear and temperature resistance. Treadwear grading will be on a comparative basis using a graded numerical sequence. For example, a tire graded on the government test track at 150 would be expected to wear 1½ times as well as a tire graded at 100. Temperature resistance tests conducted under laboratory conditions will use a comparative system of A, B, or C.

No effective date has been established for the grading of radial tires.

The traction modification, if accepted, would change traction symbols before March 1, 1979 for bias-ply tires and Sept. 1, 1979 for bias-belted. Six months after these dates, manufacturers will be required to mold all grading information into tire sidewalls. According to comments NHTSA received, consumer information would not be diminished by removing actual tire grades from the paper label since the grading system would then be found on the sidewalls.

Comments on the revised traction symbols and labeling modification should refer to the docket number (4910-59) and be submitted to: Room 5108 Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

Details--*Federal Register*: July 17, page 30586 and 30542. For more information write or call Dr. F. Cecil Brenner, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington, DC 20590; telephone 202-426-1742.

Community credit needs

Aug. 15 is deadline for comments on proposed regulations to implement the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) of 1977. Under CRA, the **Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System**, the **Comptroller of the Currency**, the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.**, and the **Federal Home Loan Bank Board** are directed to encourage lending institutions to fulfill their obligation to help meet credit needs of their communities, including low and moderate income neighborhoods. These needs must be met on a sound management basis with records kept for future evaluation by the appropriate agency.

The supervising agencies believe it more likely that community credit needs will be met on a sound management basis when community members are aware of credit availability, lending institutions well informed as to community needs, and the institutions make a sincere effort to meet those needs.

As reported in *CONSUMER REGISTER* Feb 15, the agencies are interested in learning how consumers and others believe terms such as "low and moderate income neighborhoods" should be defined, and how "credit needs" should be defined and measured. Send comments to Theodore Allison, Secretary to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, 20th St. and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20551. All material submitted should refer to FRB Docket No. R 0139.

Details--*Federal Register*: July 11, page 29918.

School lunches

Agriculture Dept.'s National School Lunch Program now allows students in middle and junior high schools to choose less than the complete lunch offered while their schools continue to receive full Federal cash reimbursement. This option, the "offer versus serve" provision, is intended to reduce food waste and is already available to senior high school students.

With approval of local school food authorities, students may select any 3 of the following foods: one-half pint milk, 2 ounces meat, poultry, fish or other protein, three-fourths cup of 2 or more vegetables, fruits or both, and one slice of whole grain or enriched bread or serving of a bread product.

Agriculture encourages schools to offer a variety of nutritious food choices so students will want to eat the full lunch.

Students not enrolled in the **Federal Lunch Program** are also given the "offer versus serve" option but must pay the full price even though they choose less than the full menu. Agriculture says it would be too complicated to keep records of the 3 different types of Federal lunch subsidies offered in local school systems.

Details--*Federal Register*: June 16, page 25990. For more information write or call Margaret Glavin, Food and Nutrition Service, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250; telephone 202-447-8130.

Funerals

Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Bureau of Consumer Protection staff report on the proposed trade regulation rule on funeral industry practices is now available for final comment. In a 526-page report based on more than 5 years of research, the staff urges FTC to adopt measures that would provide the first national regulation of the industry.

Requests for copies of the report should be sent to Public Reference Branch, Room 130, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580. Comments on the staff report should be sent -- by Aug. 21 -- to Secretary of FTC, address listed above.

Details--*Federal Register*: June 21, page 26588. For more information call Scott Klurfeld at 202-523-3427.

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consumer comment

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These forms are provided for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on these items. For more lengthy comments, feel free to use a plain sheet of paper. Send comment forms to addresses listed in CONSUMER REGISTER summaries. CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**.

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